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BOOK REVIEWS

THE DIGRESSIONS OF V. BY ELIHU VEDDER, Houghton, Mifflin Company, Boston and New York, Publishers. Price $6.00 net.

The spirit in which this autobiography is written is indicated on the title page on which is set down that it was "for his own fun and for that of his friends." A delightful vein of humor runs through the entire book, for even in recounting hardships Mr. Vedder finds something to turn to jest. Despite his many honors this painter does not apparently take himself seriously nor does he stand aloof. There is a downrightness in his writing which is delightful and gives the reader a feeling of acquaintance not only with him, but with his friends, amongst whom are many celebrities. Few references are made to his works, and these are in a frank, unaffected manner, as an incidental part of the record. In some of these utterances there is, however, great wisdom, as, for instance, in the following, which refers to a tendency "to see more in things than meets the eye." "This tendency, which unduly cultivated might lead me into the extravagant, is held in check by my sense of humor, and has enabled me at times to tread with safety that narrow path lying between the Sublime and the Ridiculous—the path of common sense, which in its turn is dangerously near to the broad highway of the Commonplace."

A list of sales from the year 1856 to 1907 is appended. Prices are given up to 1867 as "an example and a warning to young painters." After that date brief comments are made concerning the fat or leanness of the year which alone tell an interesting story. In 1907 the "small but assured income" was "as far off as ever." The volume is in itself a work of art. The cover and the head and tail pieces were specially designed for it by Mr. Vedder and many of his works are reproduced as illustrations. Between the seriousness of Mr. Vedder's drawings and paintings and the lightness of his literary style there is an interesting and striking contrast.

THE STORY OF SPANISH PAINTING, BY CHARLES H. CAFFIN, The Century Company, New York, Publishers. Price $1.20 net.

This is a continuation of the series commenced in "The Story of Dutch Painting," and is not only uniform in style of publication, but in manner of exposition. It shows how the characteristics of Spanish painting were a product of the genius of the race, affected by the local conditions that helped to shape it; sketches the personalities of the principal artists, and summarizes their individual motives and methods. The book is at once historical, biographical, critical, and appreciative. Reviewing first the history of the nation and giving a "panoramic view" of Spanish painting, the author proceeds to a discussion of the several painters, devoting a chapter to each. The story ends with Goya, though in a postscript mention is made of the work of Zuloaga, Sorolla, and other contemporary painters. Mr. Caffin went to Spain last summer to gather material for this book which is illustrated by many reproductions of paintings in Spanish museums.

THE GOLDEN AGE OF ENGRAVING, BY FREDERICK KEPPEL, The Baker and Taylor Company, New York, Publishers. Price $3.50 net.

This is avowedly a specialist's story about fine prints, but it is one which all may read with enjoyment. A good part of the book, which is now in its second edition, is made up of essays published from time to time in the magazines, but which have been carefully revised and enlarged. Part of the material is historical, part biographical. For instance, one chapter deals with four centuries of line engraving and others with Haden, Méryon and Whistler. There are several hundred illustrations, the majority of which are full page. For those desiring better acquaintance with prints this book can be heartily recommended, the subject being approached not merely from the standpoint of the connoisseur, but the enthusiastic collector.